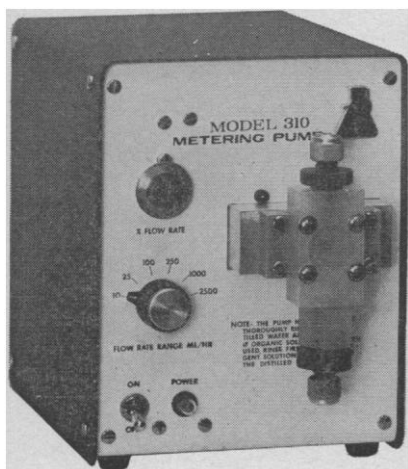


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the good of the party" (to maintain the population).

Orwell was aware of the complexities of the population problem and was skeptical of simple projections of trends. "The experts are proving now that our (the British) population will be only a few millions by the end of this century, but they were also proving in 1870 that by 1940 it would be 100 millions" (1). But Orwell was even more disturbed by the convenient rearrangement of history and memory to suit occasional demands. National problems, like national enemies, may change abruptly in a generation. Blurring these changes should indeed set Orwell's grave astir.

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Reference

1. G. Orwell, *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, S. Orwell and I. Angus, Eds. (Harcourt, Brace & World, New York, 1968), vol. 3.

Attitudes toward Women: Flexible or Feudal

"Women in academe" by Patricia Albjerg Graham (25 Sept., p. 1284) was an excellently documented and presented statement, except for two points:

- 1) I do not believe that a "European" woman exists. Having been born in Europe and having lived in different parts of that small continent, I believe that people in Naples and people in Stockholm or Vienna differ profoundly in their ways of thinking, feeling, and living. This is by no means contradicted by the fact that scientists from all those areas can communicate on a topic of mutual interest when they meet at a conference.

- 2) If there is a common trait that unites European women and distinguishes them to some extent from those in the United States, it is their flexibility in changing roles, and doing it imperceptibly to others and mostly to themselves. Even after a childhood atmosphere of early suffragettes and blue stockings, they are in most cases quite comfortable in the double role of being a female in relation to a particular male in whom they are interested and switching to being a no-gender professional in a situation that calls for professional performance. . . .

Human behavior has a biological

basis and the reproductive functions between male and female differ radically. In this area men and women appear to me like two different species. Nevertheless, men will have to develop greater psychological mobility in this age in which heightened flexibility is called for in numerous respects. They, too, will have to revise gradually some of their feudal attitudes toward women which were bred into them in the course of millenia of simpler technologies and of lower human expectations.

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While it is true that internal ambivalences beset us, the tenor of the times is vigorously in favor of women working and having less guilt about either their femininity or their children. As Graham points out, the ages that produce the greatest pressure for scholarly publication or, I may add, development of professional competence coincide with those requiring the most domestic performance. Many women not only are unwilling to leave their family responsibilities for full-time work during this period, but are unable to physically accommodate the strains of both, especially when their children are young. If they remain out of their field during this period, which may be 10 years, they may have considerable difficulty returning. Part-time work, it should be emphasized, is an excellent way for a woman to keep up academic interests and professional skills and for a university to gain additional qualified and diverse staff. Although some university administrators (Mary I. Bunting at Radcliffe) have taken the lead and some university women themselves have recognized the problem, part-time positions on university faculties are still not readily available. Let's hope that universities, even in these less plush times, will consider "the woman question" in terms of restructuring of appointments, allowing more part-time appointments for qualified women, as suggested by Graham.

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Graham's article is about as objective as a paper on biology by Lysenko. Obviously she opts for a weird society such as that of the old Shakers. The complete equality, of course, must be available to everyone. And since few,

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if any, would accept the "menial, unprofessional" work of the day care center or other similar work, the women of academe will be unable to "dump" their unprofessional duties as mothers onto other women. Therefore they must remain single or childless to fulfill the unrealistic position described as equal in every way with those held by men. If the facts were really known, they would probably show that the vast majority of women enjoy being women. Those that enjoy competing in the dreary world of man do so and do it well enough not to complain.

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"Women in academe" is emphatically true in all of its particulars. . . . Just after receiving a Ph.D., I naively accepted a part-time lectureship which promised sufficient time for reading, writing, research, some teaching, and two children at home. Despite six or seven publications based on dissertation and new research, the department refused to consider me a serious colleague. I was a drone until I was magically transformed into a professor by full-time employment.

Married women in part-time academic positions are even less valued by their male colleagues than female graduate students, who presumably can be shaped up for male-type employment. Despite receiving external criteria of success such as worthy publications, invitations to give colloquia, and respect by students, part-time employment blocks a woman from all access to prestige and power in the university. Males who run the university are hung up on a pseudo-conflict between part-time employment and professional dedication, which can be resolved only by demanding that women choose between drone status and full-time employment.

There is one conflict that I would add to Graham's inventory for married women. Once a female professor has decided to demonstrate her dedication by male rules, the larger community which judges her children's well-being may undermine her in capricious ways. Schools schedule mothers' meetings during teaching hours; the guidance counselor decides that a child with a fully employed mother needs "special" attention; ordinary school and neighborhood "scrapes" that her children experience are attributed to mother's

neglect. The professional mother is vulnerable because in the eyes of many she is not doing the best for her children. Unfortunately, day-care centers will not resolve social conflicts about women's roles; Pat Nixon lives!

Some women can become full professors and lovers-wives-mothers, but the personal requirements are so severe that few women seem likely to try. Imagine a recruitment poster which promises academic success and a full life if only you can be in the 99th percentile for all of the following: intelligence, achievement motivation, autonomy, emotional stability, efficiency, and nurturance. It would also be helpful, the ad continues, if you are attractive to men, sociable, and thick-skinned concerning the opinions of others. Most women will correctly eliminate themselves from this competition. There are easier ways to make it as a woman in this society.

Universities can make the adjustments suggested by Graham to ease role overload and to eliminate discrimination against academic women, but the extraordinary demands of the role will not be fully eased until the social role of women is changed. Until children are considered a family responsibility for two consenting adults, women cannot have equal opportunities in employment. Until women at large are required to earn their own identities instead of vicariously enjoying the status of their husbands, employed women will remain at a disadvantage. Until society can offer young women the assurance that efforts commensurate with those of men will yield comparable rewards, many will make no effort at all. Since both the requirement for independent achievement and the rewards for such efforts are missing, it is hardly surprising that few women are found in professional roles.

Experience in more egalitarian societies like the Soviet Union indicates that sex roles are not easily changed. Professional women are still burdened with responsibilities at home that men do not share. While economic necessity may push many women into employment in the U.S.S.R., the same pressures work to a lesser extent here. American academic women depend more on personal motivation to seek professional success, and if high achievement motivation must be accompanied by a consistently superior profile on all of the other relevant variables, few women will qualify. Only

when social roles require comparable efforts from professional men and women can equality of opportunity be said to exist. We are far from that ideal.

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IZA GOROFF

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Heat Suggestion—from the North

I am constantly intrigued by the notion that the heat produced from the generation of electricity, either by nuclear power or fossil fuels, should be regarded as waste. I have yet to see such a generating plant surrounded by a vast complex of hothouses growing tropical and subtropical vegetables, fruits, and ornamental plants; nor have I seen a large number of temperature-regulated warehouses making use of all the "waste" heat. Perhaps the suggestion that this waste heat could be put to valuable use to make more efficient and cheaper commodities which are presently costing a great deal in transport or independent fuel consumption is more apparent to a Canadian living in the Northwest Territories than to the comfortable majority elsewhere.

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